



II. Project Abstract

Briefly (500 words maximum) describe the proposed project clearly and concisely using the space provided.

MSD of Warren Township is pleased to submit a proposal for improving teaching and learning through the use of technology and training provided under the *Learning Technologies Competitive Grant 2009*. After consideration of current research, coupled with a straightforward review of data analyses and discussions among district leaders, several things are clear:

- While the district has witnessed significant gains in elementary school student achievement, considerable needs remain at secondary levels.
- Students who fail semester work beginning in their freshman year are at the highest risk of dropping out of school. Early success is critical.
- The greatest percentages of high school student failure occur in the content area of mathematics.
- District low student performance on End of Course Assessments (ECA) for Algebra I reveals undeniable need.

These issues, and more, compel our district to rethink expectations, current methods for delivering instruction, and to redouble efforts to better support student learning for Algebra I students in the Freshman Academy within Warren Central High School.

Through its financial support of innovative and engaging technology, this grant will provide the foundation for reaching our goals to increase: (1) the percentage of students passing Algebra I ECA; and (2) teachers' effective use of technology to enhance instruction, engage students, and to more efficiently identify and address student learning needs.

To meet these goals, Warren Township is proposing a 3-pronged approach:

1. A year-long high school Algebra I Block, established for SY 2009-10, to support incoming freshmen identified as at-risk of failing Algebra I. With a reduced class size and technology tools, two teachers will offer effective and engaging technology-enriched instruction;
2. A traditional Algebra classroom, enriched with technology, will serve as a demonstration classroom. The teacher will model the effective use of technology in instruction. This instructor will teach Algebra I for five of six instructional periods, using the sixth period to coach other Algebra I teachers; and
3. A mobile wireless computer lab and SMART Board will be available for use by all Algebra I teachers. Daily support will be provided by the demonstration classroom teacher. All Algebra I teachers will participate in scheduled bi-monthly, after school, professional development.

Experience with technology currently used in Warren Township has shown that technology tools are beneficial -- as long as they are used effectively and the staff is trained in their use. Our plan relies upon embedded professional development to ensure teachers have the skills necessary to implement the technology.

To ensure that instructional practices are impacting student learning, 4-week assessments -- aligned to *Indiana Academic Standards for Algebra I* -- occur eight times across the school year. A unique Daskala software program provides timely test results, disaggregated by standard, permitting teachers



to readily identify when standards have been learned and where greater support is needed.

In summary, the Algebra I teachers and leadership of Warren Township have the awareness of need, the willingness to work hard, and the professional development plan and formative assessment systems in place to support this proposal.